Annual Conference

Gothenburg, 20-22 May 2026

Resilience – the base for lasting sustainability in urban mobility and transport

Summary



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On the invitation of IMPACTS vice president Mikael Ivari, the annual IMPACTS conference in 2026 took place in Gothenburg. **"Resilience – the base for lasting sustainability in urban mobility and transport"** served as the umbrella theme for the conference. Originally, this topic was inspired by the City of Lviv where this conference should have taken place but couldn't due to Russia's still ongoing full-scale invasion in Ukraine.

With its many dimensions – political, social, economic and ecological – resilience is crucial for cities across Europe, having become even more important regarding Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its cities. Gothenburg was an excellent place to discuss these issues. As a coastal city, questions of resilience related to climate change and flood risk are particularly relevant. The conference provided an important opportunity to openly share experiences and discuss new ideas to meet these challenges looking at questions like:

- What are the greatest risks cities might face in the future regarding mobility and transport?
- Are we adequately prepared for unexpected incidents and crises? If not, where are the key gaps?
- Do our cities have dedicated strategies for making mobility and transport systems more resilient – and what should such a strategy include?

Several formats (keynote, sessions, panel discussion, site visits...) were used for a deep dive into a broad range of subtopics. Some first impressions and discussions were made possible by a city walk (with focus on redesign of public space) including a short introductory presentation by IMPACTS Vice President and host **Mikael Ivari** (City of Gothenburg, Urban Environment Department, Senior Advisor) on the evening before the official opening of the conference.

Opening and introduction

Representing the City of Gothenburg, the conference at Riverton Hotel was officially opened by **Aslan Akbas**, Lord Mayor of Gothenburg, not only welcoming the participants of the conference but also already giving some first insights into the big challenges Gothenburg is facing regarding resilience in urban development and mobility structures with a special focus on Gothenburg's situation near the sea and the rising risk of floods including some references to Gothenburg's past.



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The keynote speech to set the frame for the discussion during the following days was given by **Oleh Zabarylo**, Director of the Department for urban mobility and street infrastructure in the City of Lviv and IMPACTS President, starting with a very personal view from Ukraine and a presentation with the title *"Lviv's Wartime Mobility Resilience Experience"*. After a short look back into the year 2022 and the huge challenge to deal in very short time with hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons, with missile and drone attacks, with fuel shortage and energy crisis Oleh Zabarylo focused on the impressive successes of making Lviv's transport structures more resilient and efficient. The range of measures extends from better accessibility also of disabled people (street design, public transport) to more autonomous energy supply (traffic lights, buses) to the renewal of the fleets in public transport. One of the effects: public transport is the strong backbone of Lviv's mobility system with rising use and higher revenues by the introduction of electronic ticketing.

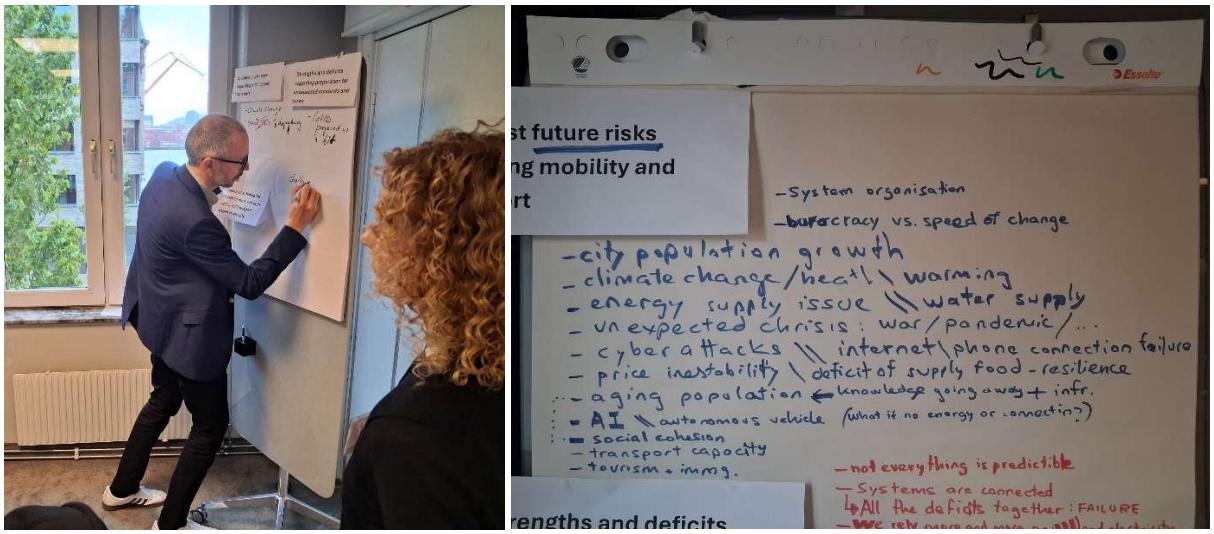


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Session 1: Where do we stand regarding resilient cities: weaknesses, challenges, questions, solutions – an open exchange

The first session (chaired by **Burkhard Horn**, IMPACTS Secretary) was designed to gather first insights, experiences and questions from the participants regarding the topic of the conference. In three groups moderated by **Orest Oleskiv** (City of Lviv), **Julius Menge** (City of Berlin) and **Pedro Fernandez** (City of Madrid) the following guiding questions were discussed:

- Where do you see the greatest risks cities might face in the future regarding mobility and transport?
- Is your city adequately prepared for unexpected incidents and crises? If not, what are the largest deficits?
- Does your city have a dedicated strategy for making mobility and transport systems more resilient? What does it look like?



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The final discussion in the plenary made clear that there is a broad range of future risks for the cities, some of them already to be dealt with today: climate change and its effects, energy and water supply, demographic changes, financial crisis, war, cyberattacks, other unpredictable developments. The cities aren't yet prepared sufficiently for these risks although (partly triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic) some first steps in the direction of more resilient structures have been taken. The activities range from emergency plans and better communication between authorities and other important institutions to investments into redundant and robust infrastructure. However, challenges like the conflict between bureaucratic structures and the speed of change, a lack of resources or the different time scales of developments remain. Learning from experiences (knowledge management) helps to get better in anticipation and adaptation.

Session 2: Strategies for resilient and sustainable transport structures – the general view

The second session, chaired by **Mikael Ivari** (IMPACTS Vice President and Senior Advisor in the Urban Environment Department of the City of Gothenburg), dealt with three different approaches how cities can deal with future risks and challenges on the strategic level.

Dermot Collins (Dublin City Council, City Engineer, Transportation & Public Realm Department) started the session with his presentation *"Urban Resilience – Building a resilient Dublin City"*. Starting with a look at the "risk landscape" for Dublin (based on a national risk heatmap) he pointed out the specific challenges for Dublin as capital city, economical centre and logistic hub (61% of all goods in Ireland move through Dublin Port). This is connected with a broad range of risks (not only for infrastructure) and topics for a resilience strategy. Based on Dublin case studies, he emphasized the challenge created by the interdependency between certain risks which could create a cascade of failures. He sketched out six general components for a consistent resilience strategy (from a living risk register to cross-sector cooperation) closing with a call for inter-European city collaboration on resilience.



© Dermot Collins, City of Dublin

Thijs Elsing (City of Amsterdam, Senior Traffic Advisor) presented another approach titled *"A Strategic approach to vital systems in Amsterdam"* and focusing on the indispensable assets of a functioning city: the natural system, water and sewage, energy, mobility, waste and data. All these demands are crucial for the livability of a city, especially in times of transition and new challenges. The "vital systems approach" brings all these issues together in a comprehensive system showing them in their context and interdependencies, in the end transferred into the urban space of Amsterdam. Thijs Elsing finally used the topic of mobility to show the different subsystems, how these interact and how they should be planned together. In the end, such an approach could help to uses synergies and to plan more consistent and coherent in a broader context also when dealing with new challenges.



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Finally, for the host city **Anna Gollungberg** (City of Gothenburg, Program Manager Climate Adaptation) presented Gothenburg's strategic plan for climate adaptation, one of the core topics if we talk about urban resilience. Gothenburg as a harbour city close to the coast is not only facing rising sea levels with all kinds of necessary measures for flood and highwater protection but also the other consequences of climate change like urban heat. To meet these

challenges Gothenburg has set up the Climate Adaptation Plan 2024-26 dealing with the different roles of the City as operator, urban developer and property owner and developing a broad range of measures.



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The session ended with a panel discussion with all speakers including keynote speaker Oleh Zabarylo under the headline “On the road to resilient cities – what do we need?”. The “fishbowl” format enabled other participants to be part of the panel temporarily.

Session 3: Strategies for resilient and sustainable transport structures – specific aspects

This session chaired by **Willem van Heijningen** (City of Amsterdam, Directorate Infrastructure Traffic and Transport, Strategist) looked deeper into some very different examples about the role of resilience in the cities’ work on mobility and transport on the strategic level. After short inputs from three IMPACTS member cities the plenary split up in groups to discuss every case more detailed closing with a summarizing discussion again in the plenary.

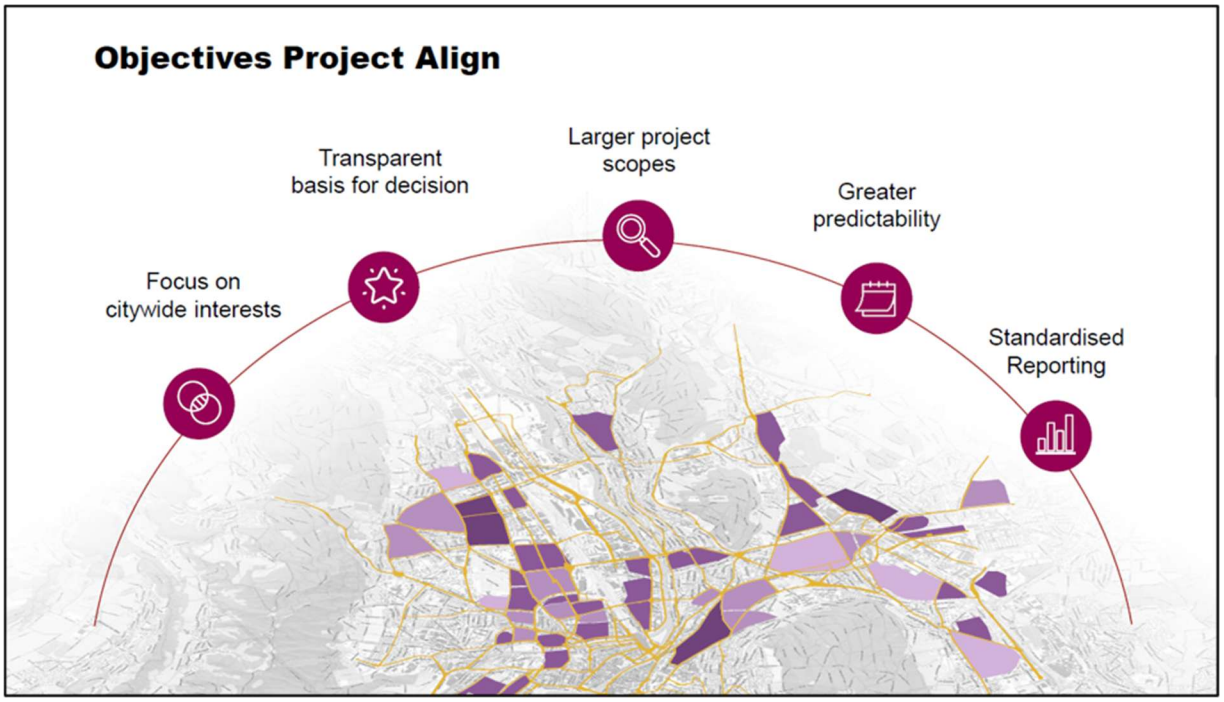






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Rupert Wimmer (City of Zurich, Department for Civil Engineering, Head of transport and urban space planning) started with a very general issue, the question of limited financial resources meeting a rising demand for invest in infrastructure. In his presentation *"Strategic portfolio planning in Zurich to allocate financial resources effectively and efficiently"* he showed first ideas from Zurich how to prioritize the limited resources with regard to the really important needs of the city regarding livability and resilient and robust infrastructure networks (also regarding maintenance). Examples for this strategy are the development of a network of "livable urban corridors" and the plan for the area around the Zurich main railway station. Finally, he raised some questions for the discussion: Do we allocate our limited resources effectively and efficiently? Which instruments help us to prioritize the right and important projects to achieve our goals? What are good practices in the cities?



© Rupert Wimmer, City of Zurich

"A new inclusive public space design process supporting the transformation of public space in Paris" was the topic of the presentation by **Michèle-Angélique Nicol** (City of Paris, Head of the PEPQA (Public Space Sharing and Air Quality) Department, Paris Mobility Agency). It dealt with the design of the revision process for the Parisian Public Space Accessibility Plan (PAVE) as a regulatory requirement. How can such a process contribute to a robust and broadly accepted update of the plan? The revision process lasted about a year with various participation formats ending with the approval by the Paris City Council in December 2025. The result was successful: there was very positive feedback from the voluntary sector regarding both the approach and the outcome and at the same time no negative feedback from the stakeholders consulted. The challenge is now the implementation of the new PAVE with its new features.

The final presentation by **Chiara di Majo** (Rome Mobility Agency, Head of European Projects and Environmental Sustainability) focused on another very special issue of resilience in urban transport and mobility planning: *"Resilient Historic Cities: Managing Pressure, Tourism, and Events in Rome without Losing Urban Function"*. The City of Rome has a strong commitment on climate with several projects going in to strengthen sustainable mobility options ("pull")

including regulating car traffic (“push”). One big challenge for a city like Rome as a tourism hotspot is to make this change process resilient to events with huge amounts of additional visitors. Public transport has a central role in this strategy.



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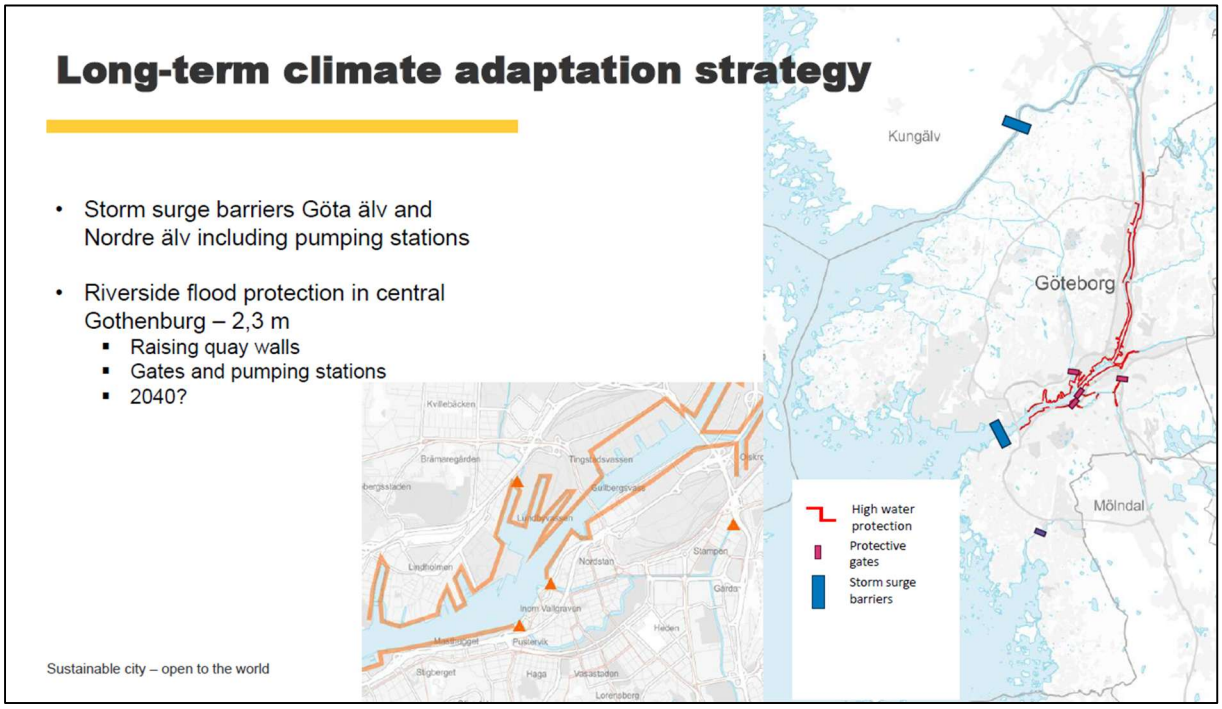
The following in-depth discussion in parallel groups and the summary in the plenary showed that despite the very different topics there are some common conclusions regarding the conference topic: To realize resilient, robust and sustainable solutions it needs a clear political mandate, good communication between different stakeholders and interests, a long-term strategy, an efficient process structure and an intelligent and strategic way to deal with limited resources.

Conference Dinner

The official conference dinner in the evening of the first day at the Nya Älvsborg fortress introduced a new format within an IMPACTS conference: the dinner speech. Instead of the invited **James Thoem** from Copenhagen, Senior Project Manager at Gehl Architects, IMPACTS Secretary **Burkhard Horn** presented his view on resilience in urban mobility and transport with a focus on governance-related issues like process design, communications, participation and the role of politics (based on a keynote given earlier this year at a conference in Frankfurt).

Site visit: Walking tour with focus on resilient infrastructure

The second day of the conference started with a sunny morning and a site visit, preceded by a short presentation at the conference venue about Gothenburg's storm surge program by **Anna Karlsson** (City of Gothenburg, Climate Adaptation Strategist). The challenges resulting from temperature and sea level rise collide with several development projects in Gothenburg's low level area. The city has developed a climate adapation strategy with a special focus on high water risks and a bundle of measures ranging from a storm barrier farther out to the sea (to be built not before 2075) to a refurbishment of the embankments (motto: "high water protection should not look like high water protection but like upgrading of public space"). Following this introduction, the participants of the conference visited ongoing renovation measures at the river bank close to the conference venue guided by **Johan Blomquist** (project manager for high water protection of the embankments) clearly following this motto.



© Anna Karlsson, City of Gothenburg





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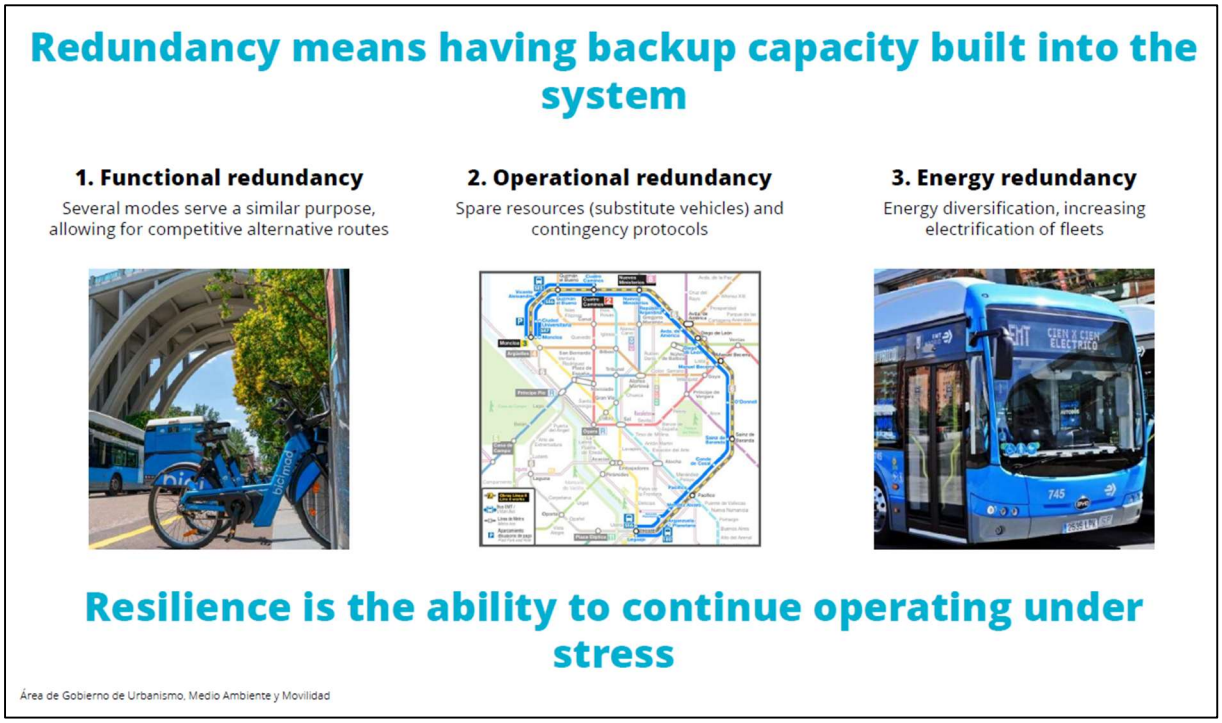
Session 4: Resilience of public space and transport infrastructure

The fourth and last session (chaired by **Brendan O'Brien** (Dublin City Council, Head of Technical Services, Transportation and Public Realm Department) and **Ivo Cré** (POLIS, Director Policy and Projects)) dealt with specific projects of the member cities on different fields of action with reference to the issue of resilience in urban mobility and transport. Seven IMPACTS member cities presented their projects with short presentations followed by Q&A. The session was split up into two parts, the first dealing with new approaches in specific planning issues, the second with the management of incidents, disasters and other crises. Here are the main insights from the presentations:

Part 1: New planning approaches

"Redundant transport systems in Madrid", **Pedro Fernandez** (City of Madrid, Head of Department for International Projects – Mobility and Environment Area)

- Efficiency in public transport ist not only about optimization, it's also about redundancy (functional, operational and on energy supply).
- Redundancy means having backup capacity built into the system.
- Resilience is the ability to continue operating under stress.
- One of Madrid's strongest redundancy mechanisms is the ability to shift passengers between metro and bus services (network of interchange stations as reliable hubs including integration of micromobility).
- Accessible and reliable information for passengers is an important part of redundancy.



© Pedro Fernandez, City of Madrid

"Findings from Vienna's Supergrätzl pilot project (low budget measures to redesign public space)", **Gregor Stratil-Sauer** (City of Vienna, Department for Urban Development and Planning, Head of Mobility Strategies)

- High density and short distances as key factors for resilient mobility structures
- Key measure in Vienna: Upgrading and redesign of public space (with synergies to climate adaptation and barrier-free mobility)
- The "Supergrätzl" as Vienna's approach to superblocks – learnings from the pilot project in Favoriten: good project with high benefit but long planning procedures and high costs
- Ideas for the future: more focus on cheap (and maybe temporary) measures, co-financing by sponsors, involvement of neighbourhood for maintenance, synergies with other infrastructural measures





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"Resilience through governance: when regulation becomes infrastructure (traffic safety by speed limits)", **Chiara di Majo** (Rome Mobility Agency, Head of European Projects and Environmental Sustainability)

- Focus on regulatory measures in Rome's historical city centre
- Limited Traffic Zone (LTZ) as enabling infrastructure developed since 1995 (access control, electronic gates, permit system and other features)
- Speed management as a new layer: zone 30 km/h for the whole historical city centre
- Benefits for safety, environment, reliability of public transport, active mobility

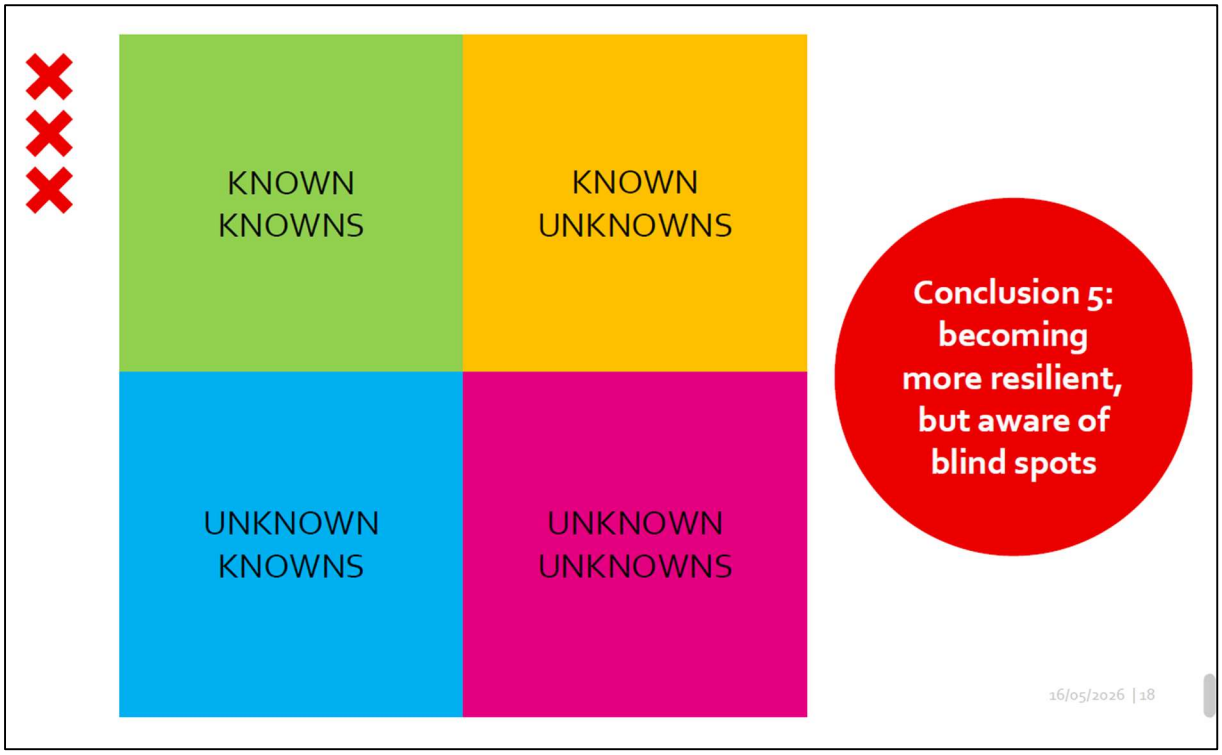
"Planning and construction of the new metro line U5 in Hamburg", **Tina Wagner** (City of Hamburg, Director-General of Transport)

- New metro line U5 (length 29 km) for 315.000 passengers/d connecting eastern and western parts of the city (housing, working places, shopping areas, leisure facilities…) with the city centre
- Resilience aspects:
    - Accelerated planning and building processes
    - CO_2-reduced building technologies
    - Synergies with climate adapted redesign of public space at the metro stations
    - Usability of metro stations as shelters

Part 2: Management of incidents, disasters and other crises

"How Amsterdam is preparing for a 72 hour power outage", **Michiel Mueller** (City of Amsterdam, Senior Traffic Advisor)

- Background: Increased risk of disruption for our systems, need for increased resilience of society, strategy needed to be prepared (based on analysis of current situation)
- Scenario: 72 power outage in the Amsterdam region
- Effects on mobility: road infrastructure, emergency routes, canal bridges and locks…
- Conclusions:
    - the system is as strong as the weakest link
    - organisational preparedness is needed including stringent safety regulations
    - communication is a crucial issue (alternatives to electronic modes)
    - always be aware of blind spots



© Michiel Mueller, City of Amsterdam

"Mobility management in Barcelona during the regional railway service outage at the beginning of 2026", **Adrià Gomila** (Barcelona City Council, Strategic Projects Manager of Barcelona Region)

- Crisis and breakdown of the regional railway service in the Barcelona region caused by severe accidents in January 2026
- Effects: congestion on highways and streets, temporary suspension of low emission zone
- Strategy: reinforcement of the metropolitan bus service and metro lines with strengthening of interchange between both modes
- Increasing use of buses caused new problems in city centre, conclusion: new interchange strategy to reduce number of buses in the city centre

"(Re-)Building bridges in Berlin: approach and effects on the urban Infrastructure", **Julius Menge** (Senate Department for Urban Mobility, Transport, Climate Action and the Environment in Berlin, Head of the Unit for Key Policy Issues of Mobility and Transport Development Planning)

- Bridges as important and critical parts of infrastructure for road and rail traffic
- About 1.000 bridges in Berlin for all traffic modes, partly in critical condition (example: highway bridge with more than 100.000 cars/d had to be closed and demolished on short notice in 2025, severe effects on street network in the area)
- Strategy regarding maintenance and rebuilding needed (prioritisation, financing, timeline)

Closing Remarks

IMPACTS Vice President and main host of the conference **Mikael Ivari** closed the conference thanking everybody for their participation and the various contributions. **Burkhard Horn** thanked the City of Gothenburg for the great hospitality including the marvelous side events like the conference dinner at Nya Älvsborg fortress and emphasized the importance of the discussions and the open exchange of views and experiences between the IMPACTS member cities (including the guests from Stockholm, Prague and POLIS). The IMPACTS conference in 2027 (in Hamburg or in Lviv) will provide the next opportunity to continue and deepen this exchange.



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